



Kwamahlati Training Services cc

Forestry Training Scenario

1. Outline of Kwamahlati Training Services

Our details are outlined and explained on our website.

2. Latest trends in training in South Africa

The length/duration of courses is really immaterial; however what **is** of significance is that companies are beginning to focus more on courses that are targeted at specific areas – rather than just booking employees on “generic” courses that may or may not make a difference in the workplace. There is a growing recognition that any money (or time) spent on training must deliver an immediate and positive result. This is in line with the national emphasis on “outcomes-based” training

3. Awareness of the Skills Levies Act

There is a surprising amount of ignorance regarding the new Act, its purpose, and just how it can benefit the employer. Many employers are unaware that one can no longer “claim back” money spent on training, but that a portion of the skills levy is redeemable from the SETA - provided that employers comply with certain requirements.

These requirements are:

- (a) Employers must appoint a Skills Development Facilitator to oversee the training and development of employees in the organisation,
- b) A Workplace Skills Plan must be compiled in **consultation with employees and submitted** to the SETA (FIETA) by the due date, and

(c) A “Training Implementation Report” detailing the **actual** training done must be submitted to FIETA by the due date.

Provided that the above steps are followed, the employer becomes eligible to apply for further “discretionary grants” which may become available from time to time.

4. Demand for Training

Unfortunately the demand for training stems largely from the need for employers to comply – either with statutory requirements (such as safety and first aid training), or with corporate requirements which are enforced in order that the grower companies be able to achieve certain standards (eg FSC, NOSA, ISO, etc).

The majority of employers have yet to reach the level of maturity which places the focus of training on the upliftment of skills and the development of the employee – and thereby the improvement of productivity of the business.

5. Resistance to the provision of training

Due to the perceived high cost of training – and to the (professed) low rates being paid to contractors – there is unfortunately a real resistance to the provision of any more than the bare minimum of training required to ensure the continuation of a contract. This mentality, coupled to a high rate of employee turnover (now becoming more and more exacerbated by the HIV/Aids pandemic), results in most training being of a “short term” nature. Little regard is therefore being given to the longer-term development of employees (or the business).

A further factor has also been the reluctance of grower companies to award longer-term contracts (ie. more than three years) to the contractors, which makes any investment in the development of their employees a gamble.